

City of Beaverton

Boards & Commissions Membership Manual



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CITY of BEAVERTON

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Dear Board and Commission Member:

Welcome to the City of Beaverton's Boards and Commissions team! Thank you for agreeing to serve your city by donating your time to our boards and commissions. We recognize what a generous sacrifice your efforts represent, and we believe both the city and you will benefit from this relationship.

As a dedicated volunteer, you will be part of a rich tradition of community service that goes back to the foundation of our city. The City of Beaverton enjoys a strong spirit of volunteerism, and I believe this spirit is, in part, what makes our city so livable. Your input will be a vital piece of the decision making process for critical issues that affect our city and your unique experience, outlook, and talents will strengthen our city government and our local community.

Your appointment to this position recognizes your high public standard of ethics and integrity as well as your skills, knowledge and commitment to the community. We know that as one of our volunteers, you will work with other board, committee or commission members to ensure that the public's interests are uppermost in your discussions and decisions.

This handbook will help you get started and make your transition into serving on a board, committee or commission as smooth as possible by reviewing some of the expectations and goals of your position. We want your volunteer position to be productive and fulfilling for you, so if we can improve this book or answer additional questions, please let us know.

Again, thank you for volunteering to serve your community as a member of a board or commission. I look forward to hearing your input and ideas!

Sincerely,



Denny Doyle
Mayor



Types of Boards and Commissions

The City of Beaverton's boards and commissions (hereafter the word "boards" will be used to describe boards, commissions and committees; and the word "city" will include the Beaverton Urban Redevelopment Agency (BURA¹)) are created by City Council². Members are generally appointed by City Council at the recommendation of the Mayor. Each of the city's boards receives its authority from City Council or the BURA Board. This authority may be to advise the Council, to make decisions on specific matters, or both. The city has 17 boards representing diverse issues and interests. Generally speaking, the boards fall into two categories: advisory and decision-making.

Advisory Boards

Advisory boards serve in an advisory capacity to the Mayor, City Council, and city staff. The information that members provide to the City Council about the community's needs and interests can have a significant effect on city policies and programs.

Advisory boards:

- Beaverton Arts Commission
- Beaverton Committee for Community Involvement
- Beaverton Council on Aging
- Bicycle Advisory Committee
- Budget Committee
- Diversity Advisory Board
- Human Rights Advisory Commission
- Library Advisory Board
- Sister Cities Advisory Board
- Social Services Funding Committee
- Traffic Commission
- Visioning Advisory Committee

¹ BURA is a distinct legal entity from the city that makes decisions regarding urban renewal activities in Beaverton in accordance with state law and Beaverton's City Charter.

² The Central Beaverton Urban Renewal Advisory Committee (CBURAC) is created by the BURA Board rather than City Council.

Decision-Making Boards

Decision-making boards have been established to render decisions on behalf of the Mayor and City Council. They also advise the Mayor and City Council on policy or legislative issues.

Decision-making boards:

Board of Construction Appeals
Planning Commission

Other boards

The city also has established other boards that provide advice and recommendations in particular areas such as

- Beaverton Urban Redevelopment Agency
- Urban Renewal Advisory Committee
- Mayor's Youth Advisory Board

Roles and Responsibilities of Members:

How to be an Effective Board Member

The importance of the work board members are doing requires that members take an active interest in and be informed about their board and its issues.

As a board member, it is your responsibility to be knowledgeable about the City Council's policy direction and the purpose of the board. All boards have a common purpose in that it is their responsibility to implement City Council policies. A staff liaison is assigned to each board to assist in realizing the Council's policies.

Effective board members:

- Attend all board meetings. Board bylaws require attendance. Multiple absences can result in the dismissal of a board member.
- Are well prepared for all meetings.
- Actively participate in all board discussions.
- Actively participate in the research, projects and activities the board is engaging in or sponsoring.
- Demonstrate a willingness to work with the board and its members.
- Focus on issues being discussed and do not allow personal feelings toward other board members to affect their judgment.
- Recognize that the board must operate in an open and public manner.
- Are aware that the authority to act is granted to the board as a whole, not to individual members.
- Are proactive with keeping up to date with the direction the city is moving toward including the city initiatives, code amendments, Beaverton Community Vision, and Mayor and Council annual priorities.
- Do not have a personal agenda, remember you represent the people of your community - not just neighbors and friends.

Roles and Responsibilities of Members: How to be an Effective Board Member (continued)

Productive and efficient meetings:

- Begin and end on time.
- Occur in a place that is accessible to all members and allows all members to be seen and heard.
- Are properly noticed so that members of the public may attend.
- Provide an agenda of items to be discussed at the meeting in advance of the meeting.
- Produce minutes that reflect the meeting's discussions.
- Promote the participation of all members.
- Adhere to the provisions of the Oregon Public Meetings law.
- Produce committee reports that recommend action with clearly stated proposals.

If you are appointed as a member of an *advisory board*, you may:

- Communicate community opinions, attitudes and needs to the Mayor, City Council, the BURA Board (as applicable) and city staff.
- Study policies, programs and services.
- Offer new proposals and recommend changes in policies, programs and services.

If you are appointed as a member of a *decision-making board*, you may:

- Hold public hearings to receive testimony from interested people.
- Deliberate the merits of various proposals.
- Render a decision on various proposals.
- Forward recommendations to the Mayor and City Council.

Both advisory and decision-making boards should consider the following when presenting information and providing direction to the Mayor, City Council, the BURA Board and city staff:

- All ideas should be expressed in clear and concise language.
- Proposed solutions should be viable and cost-effective.
- Recommendations should identify the reasons for the changes suggested.
- The advice should reflect a consensus or a majority of the board members.

Roles of Staff and Council Liaisons

The City of Beaverton assigns a staff person to each board to act as a liaison between the board and the city. City Council also selects its own liaisons to each board every year.

Liaisons assist the boards in accomplishing their goals. However, it is the board members who are responsible for actively participating in the research, projects and activities the board is engaging in or sponsoring.

Staff liaisons are responsible for:

- Arranging for meeting space and time.
- Notifying board members of meetings, including changes in meeting date/times.
- Distributing agendas and minutes to board members.
- Providing public notice of meetings on the city's website.
- Providing assistance in locating information on city policies, procedures, plans and activities in areas being discussed or deliberated by city boards.
- Assisting members in locating other resources external to the city.
- Requesting budget funds annually for the board's mission or business.

Council liaisons are responsible for:

- Serving as the primary two-way communications channel between council and the board.
- Serving as the primary informal council contact for the board.
- Helping resolve questions the board may have about the roles of council, municipal government and the board.
- Establishing formal or informal contact with the board chair and effectively communicating the role of the liaison.
- Providing procedural direction and relaying council's position to the board.
- Facilitating the training of new board members by providing suggestions and relevant information to city staff members responsible for providing such training.

Staff and council liaisons are valuable resources for board members. Liaisons can enhance the productivity and effectiveness of a board. Board members should not hesitate to ask liaisons for assistance and information. It is important to note that neither staff nor council liaisons are to drive the direction of the board.

Ethical Considerations for Board Members

Board members are expected to uphold a high standard of ethics. It is extremely important that board members avoid conflicts of interest, or even the appearance of conflicts of interest. Moreover, the interests of the public should always be the sole consideration during any board deliberation and decision.

- Board members must be familiar with and operate within their boards' governing statutes and codes, bylaws, and state and federal laws. Failure to observe relevant statutes, codes and bylaws may render the city or the board member subject to fines and other penalties. To ensure accountability, all applicable policies and procedures adopted by the board should be in written form.
- No board member may make unilateral decisions or otherwise take action without the consent of the Board as a whole.
- Board members must keep in mind that their mission is to serve the public. It is inappropriate and a violation of Oregon law to use board membership to obtain personal gain for themselves, their relatives or members of their household. For instance, use of a board member's official position for personal gain includes, but is not limited to:
 - A board member using board meetings to solicit work for a personal business.
 - A board member using city facilities or equipment to conduct personal business.
 - A board member using their position to solicit or accept benefits including offers of future employment, in exchange for taking official action.
 - A board member representing a business client before a board of which they are a member.
- If a board member is presented with the opportunity to take an official action *which will affect the financial interests* of themselves, their relatives or members of their household, *that action presents an actual conflict of interest* for that board member. If a board member is presented with the opportunity to take an official action *which could affect the financial interests* of themselves, their relatives or members of their household, *that action presents a potential conflict of interest* for that board member.
- In the event that a board member believes he or she is or will be faced with a matter which presents *an actual or potential conflict of interest for themselves, he/she must ensure* that a public disclosure of the nature of conflict is made prior to the board taking official action on the matter. In the case of an actual conflict of interest, the conflicted board member may not take any official action concerning the matter that presents the conflict.

- Board members may, in their official capacities, obtain or have access to confidential information not available to the general public. Board members should exercise care and discretion in the use of such confidential information. Board members may not, under any circumstances, use such confidential information to obtain personal gain for themselves, their relatives or members of their household.
- Board members, their relatives, and members of their household are subject to Oregon laws placing a *\$50-per-person per-year cap* on the total value of most gifts solicited or received from persons who may have an economic interest in a matter over which that Board member has official authority. Thus, board members must exercise caution in accepting gifts from individuals they believe may have such an interest.
- Board members do not speak for the Mayor, City Council or the city. They can only speak for and represent those opinions and decisions of their board, and only with the explicit consent of their board.

For additional information or clarification on the requirements of the Oregon Government Ethics Law, consult the Oregon Government Ethics Commission's Guide for Public Officials, located at: http://www.oregon.gov/OGEC/docs/Public_Official_Guide/2010-10_PO_Guide_active_links.docx



Political Campaigning

Oregon law (ORS 260.432) imposes restrictions on political campaigning by public employees. This statute also applies to appointed board and commission members when they are acting in their official capacity as a city volunteer. Appointed board or commission members are acting in their official capacity when, for example, they are at a meeting of the board or commission, working on a duty assigned by the board or commission, working on official publications for the board or commission, or when appearing at an event in an official capacity.

Prohibited from using "work time" to support or oppose measures, candidates, recalls, political committees, or petitions

Boards and Commissions members "at work" when: at a meeting of the Board or Commission; working on a duty assigned by the Board/Commission; Working on official publications; appearing at an event in an official capacity

FAQ During Campaign Season:

Q: May a Board or Commission endorse a candidate or ballot measure?

A: No.

Q: May a candidate drop by a Board or Commission meeting?

A: Yes, if equal access is available to all candidates.

Oregon Public Meetings and Records Laws

Oregon Public Meetings and Records Laws require that all public bodies engaged in doing the public's business allow the public access to their meetings and information about their meetings.

With respect to the city's boards, the public must be notified in advance of each board meeting. The staff liaison is responsible for ensuring that adequate notice is provided to the public (e.g., all board meetings are listed on the city's website and in the city's newsletter *Your City*), and for scheduling the meetings at sites and rooms that are ADA accessible. Additionally, the upcoming meeting agenda and prior meeting minutes must be provided to the staff liaison prior to the next meeting, both for board members and the public.

The laws also cover such issues as quorum, voting and content of meeting minutes.

Meeting Organization: Bylaws, Quorum, Voting

Parliamentary procedure and Robert's Rules of Order are options to use to organize meetings and discussions and ensure the opportunity for participation for all members. The following pages provide general information on bylaws, meeting organization and voting. However, more specific information on how and when to use parliamentary procedure can be found in the back of this manual.

Bylaws

Every board has a set of bylaws to direct and clarify its actions, procedures and organization. Bylaws are the guidelines by which a board functions. Bylaws should also include expectations for members. Issues such as attendance, responsibilities and discipline should be addressed in the bylaws. Board members are expected to adhere to bylaws and all relevant statutes.

An organization's bylaws generally include a number of articles, such as the following:

Quorum

A quorum is the number of members who must be present in order to conduct official business. The quorum protects against unrepresentative actions by a small number of individuals. Beaverton City Code (2.03.002(C)) establishes that a quorum is a majority of the number of positions on the board.

Meeting Organization: Bylaws, Quorum, Voting (continued)

Organization

After the chair has called the meeting to order, a board generally follows the order of business specified in its bylaws and on its agenda. If a board has not adopted an order of business, the procedure below is generally followed:

- Name of Board
- Mission Statement
- Membership
- Officers
- Meetings
- Committees, Subcommittees
- Amendment procedures for making changes in the bylaws

- Reading and approval of minutes of previous meeting(s)
- Reports of officers and standing (permanent) committees
- Reports of special committees
- Unfinished business and general orders (matters introduced in previous meetings)
- New business (matters initiated in present meeting)

Voting

Oregon Public Meetings Law requires that meeting minutes record all votes taken including the motion, who initiated and seconded the motion, and who voted in support of or opposition to the motion. Voting by secret ballot is prohibited. The chair may vote just as any other member of the board. A chair has only one vote and may not vote as a member of the board and also a presiding officer. Proxy voting is prohibited.



Meeting Minutes

Oregon Public Meetings and Records Laws require that minutes be taken for all public meetings. A few boards may have a staff person assigned to record minutes, while others have a member who is responsible for recording the minutes. Boards operate most efficiently and effectively if minutes are available for members to read prior to the next meeting. A copy of each meeting's minutes should be provided to the board's staff liaison, as meetings and records laws also require that meeting minutes be available for review by members of the public.

Meeting minutes should always contain the following information:

- Name of the organization
- Date, time, and place of meeting
- Name and title of presiding and recording officers
- Notation that there was/not a quorum present
- Members present
- Notation to the reading and approval of minutes
- Record of the reports by officers and committees
- Substance of any discussion including a reference to any documents discussed
- Record of all main motions, except those withdrawn, including name of mover, name of member seconding the motion, and major arguments
- Record of disposition of motions, including the vote of each member by name (except for boards in excess of 25 members)
- Time and type of adjournment
- Signature of the recorder

Additional resources are available in the Neighborhood Program Office. Please contact Lani Parr at 503-526-2243 or neighbormail@BeavertonOregon.gov.



General Tips for Conducting Meetings

At some point you may find yourself running a meeting. Whether you are formally designated as a chair or just "filling in," the following are a few tips that can be useful in almost any setting.

1. Introductions

Never assume that people know each other. Attending a meeting for the first time can be intimidating. Allow time at the start of your meetings for introductions.

2. Time

Make every effort to start and end meetings on time. Everyone's time is valuable. Starting late penalizes the members who show up on time. Finishing late can frustrate members and decrease their interest in participating.

3. Seating

Seating is important and can really influence whether or not members participate. Is the seating comfortable? Would name tents be helpful? Can everyone see and hear? Should the chairs be set up in a circle or lecture style?

4. Materials

Make sure that any materials the board may need for the meeting are received by members prior to the meeting. Reading and/or reviewing materials at a meeting make it difficult to participate fully.

What is a Facilitator and How Can I Be One?

If you find yourself chairing or facilitating a meeting, you should recognize that you are in a unique position compared to your fellow members. In order to be an effective facilitator, you should:

- Accurately listen to and remember behavior and conversation
- Communicate clearly
- Analyze and synthesize issues
- Identify similarities and differences among statements
- Understand multiple perspectives
- Provide feedback to members
- Provide support and encouragement
- Accept feedback from members without reacting defensively
- Recognize and intervene on ineffective behavior
- Lead by example - model positive and productive behavior

Tips for Resolving Challenging Situations

1. Neutrality

As a facilitator, your role is to increase your board's effectiveness and promote the members' full participation by maintaining the process or rules by which the meetings are run. Facilitators must be careful to act and speak in a neutral manner to encourage full participation from the group. Your role is to think about what is best for the whole group.

Common pitfalls:

- Perception that the facilitator represents one side of an issue.
Solution: *Maintain neutrality; if you can't, let someone else facilitate that portion of the meeting.*
- Perception that the process is more favorable to one group/side.
Solution: *Ensure all points of view are being acknowledged. "Are there any other comments or questions?"; ensure all members have access to written materials.*

2. Ensuring Full Participation

In order for a board to be most effective, there must be full participation from the group. Multiple perspectives and opinions can help members to brainstorm better solutions to issues.

Common pitfalls:

- A few members monopolize the discussion.
Solution: *Tell the group you would like to hear from everyone at least once before hearing from others a second (or third) time; thank the vocal members and let them know that you would like to hear from others.*
- Many members do not contribute to the discussion.
Solution: *Encourage members who have not contributed by asking them directly, "Sarah, what do you think?"; make a general statement, "There are a number of you who have not said anything. Does anyone else have any thoughts on this issue?"*
- Members do not have information/knowledge about the issue or topic.
Solution: *Ensure that members receive information prior to the meeting (it's difficult to discuss an issue when the information is received at the meeting); summarize the issue at the beginning of the meeting.*

3. Controlling the Discussion: Focus, Timing, Control

Most boards have many issues to discuss at their meetings. It can be a challenge to keep members focused on a particular issue. On the other hand, it can be just as challenging to know when to end a discussion and move on to another issue.

Common pitfalls:

- Wandering away from the agenda and issues.
Solution: "I am not sure I understand. Can you explain how this relates to the topic/issues?"; thank the person and move onto the next comment.
- An issue is being discussed for too long and members are getting restless.
Solution: Summarize frequently and ask members if they have any additional comments; watch and listen for signs that the group is in agreement to end discussion; suggest that the issue be broken into smaller pieces for discussion or be tabled for another meeting.
- The discussion is very heated and tense.
Solution: Use neutral language to rephrase a participant's suggestion or comment; when a member makes claims about an issue, ask her/him to back up their claims. "Do you have evidence of that?" Ask how many other members feel "this way"; suggest a break or table the issue for another meeting.

***Another hint - use your Recorder! Have the Recorder read back from the minutes to refresh members on what is being discussed.**

4. Voting

Voting can be useful in establishing where a board stands on a particular issue.

Common pitfall:

- Voting procedures are not clear to the members.
Solution: Make sure bylaws and other rules governing voting are clear and understood by everyone.

ONE LAST TIP: ALWAYS REFER TO THE GROUP!

Be sure to ask the board how it feels and what it wants to do. It is important to give members the opportunity to weigh in on issues, whether substantive or process oriented. This can be very helpful to you, too. When discussions become muddled, tense, or go on for too long, you can refer back to previous decisions made by the board - "Remember when we voted on that?" or "Didn't I hear that the board wanted to move onto another issue?"

By doing this, you acknowledge the board's power of decision making, strengthen your role as chair (and their support of you as a chair), and develop a clear picture of where the board stands on various issues.



The News Media

The news media has the important function of informing the public about city operations. In doing so, it provides a valuable communications link with the community. It is important to maintain a cooperative and open relationship with the media without violating privacy and other citizens' rights. The city's boards work on issues that are important to the community, and therefore may attract media attention.

The city believes it is important to have one consistent message to the media. Additionally, as a member of a board, the message to the media should be a statement from the board and not an individual board member's statement. A member's ex parte statement to the press can be grounds for appeal of a decision of a board.

If the media contacts you and you are unsure how to respond, please contact the city's Public Information at 503-526-3737 or at publicinformation@BeavertonOregon.gov.

- If your board has an upcoming event or other newsworthy item, contact your staff liaison to discuss issuing a press release. Templates are available on the city's intranet. The press release will be forwarded to the PIM office, which will send it out to the media.
- You may also post events and other newsworthy items to the city's website. Contact your staff liaison for more information.
- Keep in mind that comments you make to the press may also have to be made in a court of law. Do not risk your personal integrity, or that of another by unwarranted remarks. Just because you think a statement is off the record does not mean the press shares that belief.
- If in doubt, ask for assistance from your staff liaison.

Additional Information and Resources for Boards & Commissions

The Neighborhood Program coordinates all of the Boards of Commissions

- We host annual trainings for volunteers
- Assist with strategic planning and meeting facilitation
- Provide resources and assist with problem solving for topics your board is tackling
- Oversee by laws and ordinances changes
- Help with specialized board recruitment

City of Beaverton: www.BeavertonOregon.gov

Department of Justice: www.doj.state.or.us

National Association of Parliamentarians: www.parliamentarians.org

Robert's Rules of Order: www.robertsrules.com

Parliamentary Procedure at a Glance

TO DO THIS:	YOU SAY THIS:	MAY YOU INTERRUPT THE SPEAKER	DO YOU NEED A SECOND?	IS IT DEBATABLE?	CAN IT BE AMENDED?	WHAT VOTE IS NEEDED?	CAN IT BE RECONSIDERED?
Adjourn meeting	"I move that we adjourn"	NO	YES	NO	NO	MAJORITY	NO
Call an intermission	"I move that we recess for"	NO	YES	NO	YES	MAJORITY	NO
Complain about the heat, noise, etc.	"I rise to a question of privilege"	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO VOTE	NO
Temporarily suspend consideration of an issue	"I move to table the motion"	NO	YES	NO	NO	MAJORITY	NO ¹
End debate and amendments	"I move the previous question"	NO	YES	NO	NO	2/3	YES ²
Limit-Extend Limits of Debate	"I move that the debate on the pending motion be limited (extended) to"	NO	YES	NO	YES	2/3	YES
Postpone discussion for a certain time	"I move to postpone the discussion until"	NO	YES	YES	YES	MAJORITY	YES
Give closer study of something	"I move to refer the matter to committee"	NO	YES	YES	YES	MAJORITY	YES ³
Amend a motion	"I move to amend the motion by"	NO	YES	YES ⁴	YES	MAJORITY	YES
Introduce business	"I move that...."	NO	YES	YES	YES	MAJORITY	YES

THE MOTIONS LISTED ABOVE ARE IN ORDER OF PRECEDENCE.... BELOW THERE IS NO ORDER....

Protest breach of rules or conduct	"I rise to a point of order."	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO VOTE ⁵	NO
Vote on a ruling of the chair	"I appeal from the chair's decision"	YES	YES	YES	NO	MAJORITY	YES
Suspend the rules temporarily	"I move to suspend the rules so that...."	NO	YES	NO	NO	2/3	NO
Avoid considering an improper matter	"I object to consideration of this motion"	YES	NO	NO	NO	2/3 ⁶	YES ⁷
Verify a voice vote by having members stand	"I call for division" or "Division!"	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO VOTE	NO
Request information	"Point of information"	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO VOTE	NO
Take up a matter previously tabled	"I move to take from the table...."	NO	YES	NO	NO	MAJORITY	NO
Reconsider a hasty action	"I move to reconsider the vote on...."	YES	YES	YES ⁸	NO	MAJORITY	NO

NOTES:

- 1 - Affirmative votes may not be reconsidered.
- 2 - Unless vote on question has begun.
- 3 - Unless the committee has already taken up the subject.
- 4 - Unless the motion to be amended is not debatable.
- 5 - Unless the chair submits to the assembly for decision.
- 6 - A 2/3 vote in negative is needed to prevent consideration of main motion.
- 7 - Only if the main question has not been debated yet.
- 8 - Unless the motion to be reconsidered is not debatable.

This manual is produced as a service of the
Neighborhood and Events Program.

If you have comments or suggestions please contact:
Lani Parr, 503-526-2243
neighbormail@BeavertonOregon.gov

www.BeavertonOregon.gov/Neighborhoods

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